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GBI Mobile for Development Strategy

The GBI program's goal in the m4d space is to make USAID programs and missions more effective in achieving their development goals by increasing their ability to effectively make use of mobile solutions. This will be accomplished through three core strategies

Providing demand-driven solutions

We will work with programs and missions to understand their activities and make them aware of how mobile solutions could add value. This is the phase of identifying opportunities. Once opportunities have been identified we will work with missions to source the required software, hardware, or application.

Outstanding issues: many of them are the same as in the communications plan. How do we make our audience aware of the potential of m4d solutions? What can we offer to missions once opportunities have been identified? Requires communication plan to be finalized before we can finalize a plan for this strategy.

We briefly discussed how this would operate with Erin on Tuesday evening last week. She suggested that NetHope members have the capability to design these solutions. So a big part of our strategy should be putting groups in touch with the right people in Net Hope. It should also be about guiding the parties involved in creating the solution by providing best-practice information and lessons learned from past experiences in the area.

Building local capacity

We will work to strengthen the local mobile application developer industry. This will leverage local knowledge to create applications tailored to local needs, create jobs and opportunity for local entrepreneurs, and boost the local economy through the sourcing of apps as well as through the use of apps.



Outstanding issues: see latest LID concept paper, which will be a subcomponent of the m4d strategy. Current issues include corporate relationships and finding “in” in local ICT communities, and finding supporting institutions.

Providing supply-driven solutions

While this sounds like a bad word in development-speak, we simply cannot ignore the fact that the cutting edge of innovation is in the developed world. We need to keep a close eye on this industry to see if new innovations emerge that may themselves suggest a problem they can solve. It may be the case that no one recognized the problem until the solution presented itself. In this case it will be important to make missions and programs aware of new mobile technologies and work with them to decide if effective use can be made of them.

This will require that we maintain close relationships with technology firms. I'm not sure how to codify this strategy, but perhaps we can discuss the current One App idea that Darrell is pursuing as a case study in what our strategy should be here. That is something that is supply driven – it came out of Silicon Valley and we are seeing if we can find a development application for it.